

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

REMINISCENCES OF CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

By G. W. FOOTE.

WHILE Mr. Bradlaugh's loss is being mourned by thousands of Freethinkers, and his great personality is fresh in their minds, I propose to write a few columns of my recollections of him. I do not intend to be methodical, and certainly not exhaustive. I could write a whole volume of reminiscences, especially if I had time to consult the file of the *National Reformer* for records to refresh my memory. But I have not the time to do this at present, nor is there space in the *Freethinker* for such a mass of copy. I shall content myself, therefore, with jotting down, in a more or less disjointed manner, some of my recollections of Mr. Bradlaugh during the twenty-two years I knew him.

When I came to London, in January 1868, I was eighteen years of age. I had plenty of health and very little religion. While in my native town of Plymouth I had read and thought for myself, and had gradually passed through various stages of scepticism, until I was dissatisfied even with the advanced Unitarianism of a preacher like the Rev. J. K. Applebee. But I could not find any literature in advance of his position, and there was no one of whom I could inquire. Secularism and Atheism I had never heard of in any definite way, although I remember, when a little boy, having an Atheist pointed out to me in the street. Naturally I regarded him as a terrible monster. I did not know what Atheism was except in a very vague way; but I inferred from the tones, expressions, and gestures of those who pointed him out to me, that an Atheist was a devil in human form.

Soon after I came to London I found out an old school-fellow, and went to lodge with his family. They were tainted with Atheism, and my once pious playmate was as corrupt as the rest of them. They took me one Sunday evening to Cleveland Hall, where I heard Mrs. Law knock the Bible about delightfully. She was not what would be called a woman of culture, but she had what some devotees of "culchaw" do not possess—a great deal of natural ability; and she appeared to know the "blessed book" from cover to cover. Her discourse was very different from the Unitarian sermons I heard at Plymouth. She spoke in a plain, honest, straightforward manner, and I resolved to visit Cleveland Hall again.

Three or four weeks afterwards I heard Mr. Bradlaugh for the first time. It was a very wet Sunday evening, but as 'bus-riding was dearer then than it is now, and my resources were slender, I walked about three miles through the heavy rain, and sat on a backless bench in Cleveland Hall, for which I think I paid twopence. I was wet through, but I was young, and my health was flawless. Nor did I mind the discomfort a bit when Mr. Bradlaugh began his lecture.

Fiery natural eloquence of that sort was a novelty in my experience. I kept myself warm with applauding, and at the finish I was pretty nearly as dry outside as in. From that time I went to hear Mr. Bradlaugh whenever I had an opportunity. He became the "god" of my young idolatry. I used to think of him charging the hosts of superstition, and wish I could be near him in the fight. But it was rather a dream than any serious expectation of such an honor.

When the new Hall of Science was opened I became a pretty regular attendant. I heard Mr. Charles Watts, who was then as now a capital debater; Mr. G. J. Holyoake, Mr. C. C. Cattell, Mr. Austin Holyoake, and perhaps one or two other lecturers whom I have forgotten. Mr. Austin Holyoake frequently took the chair, especially at Mr. Bradlaugh's lectures, and a capital chairman he was, giving out the notices in a pleasant, graceful manner, and pleading for financial support like a true man. He was working hard for the success of the enterprise himself, and had a right to beg help from others.

Mr. Bradlaugh, however, was the great attraction in my case. Perhaps I was more impressionable at that time, but I fancy he was then at his best as an orator. In later life he grew more cautious under a sense of responsibility; he had to think what he should not say as well as what he should. He cultivated the art of persuasion, and he was right in doing so. But at the earlier period I am writing of he gave a full swing to his passionate eloquence. His perorations were marvellously glowing and used to thrill me to the very marrow.

Gradually I began to make acquaintances at the Hall. I got to know Mr. Austin Holyoake and his charming wife, Mr. and Mrs. Bayston, Mr. Herbert Gilham, Mr. R. O. Smith, and other workers. By and bye I was introduced to Mr. Bradlaugh and shook hands with him. It was the proudest moment of my young life. I still remember his scrutinising look. It was keen but kindly, and the final expression seemed to say "We may see more of each other."

In 1870 I wrote my first article in the *National Reformer*. For a year or two I wrote occasionally, and after that with tolerable frequency. I was also engaged in various efforts at the Hall; helping to carry on a Secular Sunday School, a Young Men's Secular Association, etc. Naturally I was drawn more and more into Mr. Bradlaugh's acquaintance, and when he found himself unable to continue the Logic Class he had started at the Hall he asked me to carry it on for him. Of course I was proud of the invitation. But the Class did not live long. It was not Logic, but Mr. Bradlaugh, that had brought the members together.

Mr. Bradlaugh and I were brought into closer acquaintance by the Republican agitation in England after the proclamation of the present French Republic. I attended the Republican Conference at Birmingham in 1871, where I first met my old friend Dr. Guest of Manchester, Mr. R. A. Cooper of Norwich, Mr. Daniel Baker, Mr. Ferguson the Glasgow Home Ruler

and other veterans of reform. We held our Conference on Sunday in the old meeting-place of the Secular Society, which was approached by very abrupt steps, and being situated over stables, was not devoid of flavor. On Monday the Conference was continued in one of the rooms under the Town Hall. A long political programme was concocted. I was elected Secretary, and had the honor of speaking at the public meeting in the large hall. It was my first appearance in such a perilous position. I was apprehensive and I said so. But Mr. Bradlaugh put his hand on my shoulder and told me not to fear. His kind looks and words were an excellent tonic. When I rose to speak I thought next to nothing about the audience. I thought "Mr. Bradlaugh is listening, I must do my best." And now as I am writing, I recall his encouraging glance as I looked at him, and the applause he led when I made my first point. He was my leader, and he helped me in an elder-brotherly way. Nothing could exceed his considerate generosity. Other people did not see it, but I remember it, and it was typical of the man.

One incident at the Conference is worth noting. It occurred in the afternoon, when Mr. R. A. Cooper (I think) was in the chair. The question of Free Education was being discussed. Mr. Bradlaugh did not quite like it, nor did I. He asked me to go with him into an ante-room and consider an amendment. What it was I can hardly remember, although I recollect that Mr. Cooper was very sarcastic about it. Since then my own opinion has changed, as I dare say Mr. Bradlaugh's had changed; and the incident would not be worth recalling if it did not throw a light upon Mr. Bradlaugh's philosophy. He was always in favor of self-help and individual responsibility, and he was naturally hostile to everything that might weaken those precious elements of English life.

(To be continued.)

MR. BRADLAUGH'S GRAVE.

MANY of Mr. Bradlaugh's admirers, who could not attend the funeral, travelled to Brookwood on Sunday, and visited his grave in Woking Cemetery. No doubt it will be the object of many a pilgrimage in future years. We hear that the Hindus are talking of bringing over Indian marble for an erection over Mr. Bradlaugh's remains. This is an excellent idea. But the Hindus must not monopolise the undertaking. Freethinkers and Radicals in England must also be represented. Whatever is placed on Mr. Bradlaugh's grave should possess artistic merit; it should also symbolise or express his character and achievements. Mr. Foote has convened a special meeting of the Executive of the National Secular Society to consider this matter, and to make arrangements for participating in the erection of a memorial.

JEWISH CURES.

If, for instance, we think of medicine as the most necessary of the sciences, how absolutely was any knowledge of the art unknown to the Jew. Herod's doctors immersed the diseased monarch in a vessel of warm oil as a cure for his complicated maladies. For palsy, rheumatism, and nervous pain the Jew then, as in our own time, bathed in the intermittent pool which rises in the Kedron valley. For tooth-ache he carried pepper in his mouth, for ear-ache the egg of a locust was a cure, for sleeplessness the tooth of a living fox, for hydrophobia the skin of a male adder, for ague the nails from the cross of a malefactor.—*Rabbi Jeshu*, p. 45.

RELIGIOUS DISABILITIES.

MR. GLADSTONE'S great speech last week on his motion to permit Roman Catholics to become either Lord Chancellor or Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, suggests several points of interest to Freethinkers. We need not open the old question, What toleration should be extended to the intolerant? As Monsignor Capel is reported to have said, "You are bound to accord it to us on your principles, even though we are bound to withhold it from you on ours." We say at once that our objection to Mr. Gladstone's proposal is that it was not broad enough. We should like to see the old man eloquent sweep away the very last shred of religious disabilities. The disabilities of the Catholics in their origin were political. The intolerance complained of arose because Catholics refused to acknowledge the supremacy of the throne, and because the State was in absolute danger from their machinations to restore the old faith. The disabilities continued long after the danger was passed, and although we may wish that they had all been removed in the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, we are bound to allow that, in view of the primary allegiance of the Catholic being ever to the foreign head of his Church, the measure can only be considered one of expediency. That it may be expedient that a Roman Catholic should become Viceroy of a mainly Roman Catholic country, few except Orangemen will deny. That every other office should equally be open to all citizens is the guiding principle of modern democracy. The offices in question now hold more direct practical power than the crown, and if they may be held by Catholics we see no reason the throne should not also be open to a Catholic.

Dr Joseph Parker urges, as Mr. Gladstone himself urged, in his pamphlet on "Vaticanism," in 1874 after the Irish Roman Catholic priests had crushed his Irish University Bill, and so led to the downfall of his government, Roman Catholicism seeks to be a political faith, and to re-establish temporal power. But Mr. Gladstone has advanced wonderfully since then, and so may Joseph Parker, though we rather admire Joseph's unusual independence in not following his leader everywhere. The answer to Dr. Parker is, that practically the temporal power is dead; practically English Catholics are the same as other English citizens, and it is more to the advantage of the commonwealth to treat all alike and get, if possible, the best men to the top, whatever their creed, than to make any invidious distinctions, which can only strengthen the very feeling of non-citizenship to which objection is taken. These objections founded on fears which, though not out of place when Catholicism was powerful and boldly took the principle of "no faith with heretics," have little justification now. Liberty can and will by eternal vigilance take care of itself.

There is no safe rule but freedom and fair play all round. We claim nothing for ourselves we are unwilling to accord to the most bigoted of our opponents. But we confess ourselves anxious to know if Mr. Gladstone is ready to remove the disabilities which affect Freethinkers. He is aware that money left to Secularists to build halls or carry on their propaganda can be and has been taken away from them. He knows that under the statute 9 and 10, William III., c. 32, for suppressing Blasphemy, any one who denies the Christian Religion to be true or the Old and New Testament to be of divine authority, may be punished with three years' imprisonment, deprived of all civil offices and virtually out-lawed. He is doubtless aware that Lord Chief Justice Coleridge has described this statute as "ferocious," and that Justice Stephen has given most excellent reasons why it should be removed from the statute book. But will Mr. Gladstone, with no

powerful party to conciliate, do us this simple measure of justice? We are not very sanguine. A just cause is usually left to enforce itself.

Mr. Gladstone had a striking instance before him. At the close of his speech he made a telling reference to the controversy about the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh, by which the bigots of the House so thoroughly disgraced themselves, to their own final discomfiture through his courageous persistence. He asked, Does any one who hears me believe that that controversy, so prosecuted and so abandoned, was beneficial to the Christian religion? But while seeking to commend his measure in the name of religion, he was careful to add that he urged it primarily and mainly on the grounds of constitutional law and political wisdom. This is noticeable, coming from so religious a man as Mr. Gladstone. It shows the retiring position which now and henceforward religious questions must take. Politics are secularised. In that fact lies our hope. But we must never cease our efforts until the obnoxious persecuting laws are erased from the statutes. While they remain they are a menace ever ready to the hands of the unscrupulous.

J. M. WHEELER.

IN MEMORIAM—CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

Brave friend of Freedom, tyrant's lifelong foe,
Strong-hearted champion of a noble faith,
Your work shall live, tho' you yourself lie low;
In life unconquer'd, conquering now in death.

Freethought, free speech, you claimed as all men's right—
Means to an end—that end is all men's need;
To show to all the world in Truth's fierce light
The errors of the bigot's cursing creed.

The pensioned bastard and the tithes-fat priest,
The rent-gorged grabber of the people's land—
These feared you most, and these you feared the least;
Still held as foes, and did as foes withstand.

Through all your manhood, aided or alone,
You fought for Truth, as only true men can.
Now Fame and Freedom claim you for their own,
And cry to all the world, "This was a man!"
—E. NESBIT (*Weekly Dispatch*).

MR. BRADLAUGH IN "GOOD OLD TIMES."

Blyth may well hang its religious head in shame for its early treatment to Mr. Charles Bradlaugh. To the everlasting disgrace of the people of Blyth, some years ago Mr. Bradlaugh was not only denied food to ease his hunger, but treated like a leper when he visited the bigoted little port, and was compelled to walk to Bedlington in order to get a place to rest his weary head and body. It has been stated in a daily newspaper that Mr. Burt, M.P., who was but married at the time and lived at Cowpen Quay, took Mr. Bradlaugh to his house and gave him refreshment. However, the occasion that Mr. Bradlaugh came to Bedlington from Blyth was the means of filling the Bedlington Radicals with indignation at the shameful treatment to Mr. Bradlaugh, and they were determined to wipe out such a stain upon the good name of the district. The Rads., with Radical loyalty, hired a hall at Blyth and paid for it, and, as a set-off to the theoretical charity of the church and chapel goers of the Blyth anti-Christian barbarians, invited Mr. Bradlaugh to the hall, and here the Bedlington Rads., in full force presented Mr. Bradlaugh with an illuminated address and a purse of gold as a solace to his wounded feelings. The occasion was a memorable one, from the fact that the hall platform was graced by such men as Mr. Thomas Glasey, M.P. Queensland; County Councillors, Dr. Jas. Trotter and A. Fairburn; Mr. Robert Elliott, Radical poet; Mr. John Bryson, ex-President of the Northumberland Miners; Mr. Ralph Young, present Secretary of the Miners' Association; Mr. Robert Wharrier, and other notable characters. The scene at the presentation was one of emotion, for Mr. Bradlaugh fairly broke down, and in spite of his iron will the big tears rolled down his cheeks, at this the first occasion in his life receiving such practical Christianity.—*Morpeth Herald*.

HE KNEW THEIR VALUE.

We extract the following from *A History of Booksellers*, by Henry Curwen, an interesting volume, published by Chatto and Windus:—

"Much of Rivington's business consisted in the publication of sermons, which, as a simple commission trade, was profitable without risk. An amusing story is told, which proves that the ponderous nature of his trade stock did not prevent Charles Rivington from being a man of kindly humor. A poor vicar, in a remote country diocese, had preached a sermon so acceptable to his parishioners, that they begged him to have it printed, and, full of the honor conferred and the greater honors about to come, the clergyman at once started for London, was recommended to Rivington, to whom he triumphantly related the object of his journey. Rivington agreed to his proposals, and asked how many copies he would like struck off.

"Why, sir," replied the clergyman, "I have calculated that there are in the kingdom ten thousand parishes, and that each parish will, at least, take one, and others more, so that I think we may venture to print thirty-five or thirty-six thousand copies."

Rivington remonstrated, the author insisted, and the matter was settled. With great self-denial, the clergyman waited at home for nearly two months in silence, hoping for news of extensive sales, but at length the hope of fame and riches so tormented him that he could hold out no longer, and he wrote to Rivington desiring him to send in the debtor and creditor account at once, but kindly adding that the cash could be forwarded at his own convenience. What, then, was his astonishment, anguish, and tribulation, when the following account was received:—

The Revd. Dr. * * *

To C. Rivington, Dr.

	£	s.	d.
To printing and paper 35,000 sermons	785	5	6
By sale of 17 copies of said sermon	1	5	6

Balance due to C. Rivington 784 0 0

However, two or three days later his grief was turned to joy by receiving another letter from Rivington to the following purport:—"Rev. Sir, I beg pardon for innocently amusing myself at your expense, but you need not give yourself any uneasiness. I knew better than you could do the extent of the sale of single sermons, and accordingly only printed one hundred copies, to the expense of which you are heartily welcome."

WHAT HE DID WITH THE FLOCK.

A religious society worshipping not many miles from New London, Conn., decided to build a new church this season, and the pastor, among others, was chosen to solicit funds. He did his work very zealously, taking not only the widows' but the children's mites as well. This energetic pastor has a class of children in the Sabbath school, and one Sunday not long since while instructing them he compared himself to the Good Shepherd and then inquired what the latter did with his flock. One bright eyed little fellow promptly replied:—"He shears them!" All within hearing smiled at this answer except the pastor.

THE DECAY OF CHRISTIANITY.

And this reminds me of what I have just read in the *Andover Review* for November. It is the organ of New England Orthodoxy. It is now lamenting the decay of religious interest among the farming population of the North. Dr. Dunning says that there are ninety-five towns in Maine where no religious services are held, and there are more country villages in Illinois without the gospel than in any other state in the Union. Just think of that! The great state of Illinois, that has two counties which make more grain than all Georgia. This great state that stands fifth in the scale of education, and fortieth in the grade of Christian religion.—*Bill Arp in the Louisville "Home and Farm."*

Since on the battle-field of good and evil,
The damned are many the redeemed but few;
In the great issue between God and Devil,
The Devil must be the stronger of the two.

A PLEA FOR TRUTH.

BY MONCURE D. CONWAY, M.A.

(Concluded.)

As a final example, we have before us the ordinary conception of a materialist. Very few people are competent to pursue those philosophical studies which underlie the various conclusions called nominalism, realism, intuitionism, utilitarianism, idealism, materialism. But the latter word has a familiar sound; materialism is related to matter, and matter plainly means the earth, and flesh and blood, food and drink; consequently a materialist must mean a gross, fleshly character, a man who believes in nothing he cannot bite, and, as opposed to the idealist, he must be a man without ideas. This popular notion of a materialist recalls the sad fate of one of our artists, who made a sea-side picture, and among the common objects of the seaside which he painted on the sands was a blood-red lobster. He had never seen a lobster, except as boiled for the table, and he supposed it had the same color when washed up from the sea. He painted in accordance with his experience; and his surprising work so added to his experience, that he is now, I believe, a respectable merchant. And so the average orthodox man bestows on the materialist his own experience of matter, and boils him in the hot water of his theologic consciousness very red. But when we come to consider the materialists as they are, we find them quite the reverse. It would be difficult—I might almost say impossible—to find in the long list of eminent materialists a single gross or sensual character. English materialists have been known to us as men especially consecrated to ideas. They have been such men as Shelley, in whose poems of Nature Robert Browning found a high correspondence with the divine; or Robert Owen, and his fellow-socialists, giving up life and fortune in the pursuit of an ideal society; and such men are fairly followed to-day by the men of science, and the Positivists, and the Secularists—men of plain living and high thinking, almost ascetic in their self-denial, and ever dreaming of higher education, of co-operation, and of other schemes for the moral, intellectual, or social advancement of mankind. Such are the men for whom Christians in their palaces sigh, deploring, amid their luxury, the gross materialism of the times!

Now, let me not be misunderstood. The fact that believers in these several doctrines have contradicted by their lives and characters the *à priori* theories formed about them, does not prove their doctrines true. The fact that Paine, when the American Congress voted him money for his writings, refused to take it, poor as he was, but devoted it to the cause of liberty, refutes the idea that an infidel must be selfish; but it does not prove Paine's belief to be true. Nor does the life of Paul prove the truth of predestination, nor that of Shelley the truth of materialism. As little do such facts show that there is no connection between intellectual convictions and practical life. What such facts do show, is just this: that the implied method of dealing with questions is treacherous. Truth is not to be tested by anyone's speculative apprehensions as to its results. It is as if a painter should sit down at the base of a hill he has never ascended to sketch the landscape which he supposes to be seen from its summit. The height may command outlooks he cannot imagine until he has climbed it. If the orthodox believer really occupied the point of view reached by the thinker seen only from his own, he might find him surrounded by prospects, forces, influences, which alter the case materially. Every liberal thinker's experience must confirm this. The Freethinker knows well that it is the sign of an embryonic phase of inquiry, to dread its consequences upon the character or happiness of any man, woman, or child. It has not brought gloom to himself, nor demoralisation; he does not find his life a discord in contrast with any "melodious days" when he believed in a jealous God and aawning hell; he knows that truthfulness is the sustaining thing, and the ardent pursuit of truth able to fill heart and brain with enthusiasm and hope. Why should he imagine that what has brought to himself liberation and light should bring a shadow on the life of his "praying sister," whom he can only regard as a victim on whom Superstition, like a ghou, is preying?

The free inquirer will discover full soon that the only "saving faith" is a perfect trust in truth, and that the only real infidelity is the belief that a lie can do better work than truth. He will take to heart Montaigne's advice, and fear only Fear. No alarms about the consequences of the

diffusion of truth can shake his nerves or cause the balance to tremble in his hand. Truth has ever justified herself. She can look back to fair results, to the noblest triumphs, and in their light see the chains that bind all the lions on her path. We pursue our inquiries, not without experience, not in the infancy of the world, but amid the mighty shades of heroic forerunners; amid a cloud of brave witnesses, who knew that the children of Truth have nothing to fear, living or dying; whose fidelities have built up the temples of Science and Civilisation amid the clamors of cowards; and they all cry shame on the fears that would betray our reason and sap our strength; they cry Onward! to the heart that abandons the flesh-pots of falsehood, even for a wilderness where leads the pillar of truth—be it fire, be it cloud.—Reprinted.

ACID DROPS.

Some strange compliments have been paid to Mr. Bradlaugh since his death by new-found admirers in the ministry. The Rev. W. Walsh, of Newcastle, said "He reminded one of the old prophet Elijah," and expressed his conviction that he was now with God. The Rev. C. A. Berry, of Wolverhampton, considered him an instrument of God without knowing it, and that "his Atheism was the product of mediæval theology and ecclesiastical impatience."

A Congregational minister in High-street, Kingsland, gave out that he was going to discourse on the late Charles Bradlaugh. He especially invited "infidels," and said he would make members of them all. He has clearly a big job on hand. We wish him all the success he deserves.

It seems hopeless to suppose the religious press will ever try to understand Freethinkers. The *Baptist* says: "His funeral was a weirdly pathetic scene. Buried like a dog, yet some 3,000 mourners at his grave, many bearing bright-colored rosettes and other indications of gladness. But immortality only a laughing-stock to that same crowd!" Does the *Baptist* suppose that the colors worn at a soldier's funeral are indications of gladness?

Suppressed hate is the characteristic of the notice of Mr. Bradlaugh in the Roman Catholic *Weekly Register*. It compares him with the recently deceased John Hampden, who held the theory that the earth was flat—a doctrine, by the way, which the Church did its best to uphold as long as it could. Its bitterest pill is that the Church finds an hindrance to the circulation of its usual lies of the death-bed of an Atheist. Mrs. Bonner's pathetic narrative of her father's last hours it describes as "bravado," and declares "Our own toleration stops short of allowing it to pass without a protest against this glorying in shame." The toleration of the Jesuits who conduct the *W. R.* is doubtless of the Torquemada character, only they do not always let it peep out so plainly.

Contrast with the rabid rage of the Catholic *Weekly Register*, the mild rebuke of the Unitarian *Inquirer* to the death-bed ghouls who sought to pester Mrs. Bonner:—"When will it be understood that life is as sacred as death, and that an honest soul is no less compelled to face the responsibilities of his convictions when in full strength than when his powers are waning and the films are gathering over his eyes."

In its notice of Mr. Bradlaugh, the sometimes solid and learned *Guardian* falls into the usual characteristic Christian ignorance of antagonists. It says, "In his anti-Christian polemics he was simply a follower of Voltaire and Tom Paine." It is curious that these are the names always invoked by those unacquainted with the present state of sceptical argument.

The spiritist *Medium*, after suggesting that Mr. Bradlaugh was a rare medium, used by rare spirits for rarer purposes, says: "He is to be congratulated on ending his life without any such avowal as would indicate that he had fallen a victim to the blandishments of the operators in theosophy."

Mr. Stead is going to include Atheists in his church of the future, and some of his flabby-minded followers have already placed Mr. Bradlaugh in their heaven, and promise the like reward to us if we only behave ourselves. The poor creatures cannot be expected to understand that we are working for something different from a harp and a halo for ourselves.

Hugh Price Hughes has been telling the Barnsley folk why Mr. Bradlaugh became an Atheist. It does not occur to him that Mr. Bradlaugh brought the matter out for himself. He does not appear to have read what Mr. Bradlaugh has written on the subject. He attributes Mr. Bradlaugh's heresy to his having been snubbed by a clergyman when he was a boy. Had it not been for that snub Mr. Bradlaugh's brains would have counted for nothing. In Mr. Hughes's opinion he would have lived to be a great pillar of the Church!

Very likely Price Hughes thinks he is showing charity to Mr. Bradlaugh. But could he insult such a man worse than by saying that he allowed a mere accident to determine the convictions of his life?

Mr. Hughes has a similar theory about Mr. G. J. Holyoake, with whom he says he has "lately formed a very intimate and affectionate acquaintance." He says that Mr. Holyoake was driven to Atheism by the preaching of an eminent Dissenting minister. Evidently Mr. Hughes has not read the *Trial of Theism*, or if he has he has read it in the same spirit as that in which he wrote the story of the converted shoemaker.

The Rev. Dr. Lunn is a bosom friend of Price Hughes. His sermon on Mr. Bradlaugh is reported in the *Christian World Pulpit*. It contains as much silliness to the square inch as any composition we ever read. Dr. Lunn supposes that if Christians had not persecuted Mr. Bradlaugh (what an "if"!) he would have been a "valiant defender" of Christianity. He also speaks of Secularism as a "dying cause," in spite of official statements as to its recent progress; and actually repeats, without a blush, the falsehood which Mr. Holyoake corrected in the *Star*. Altogether it seems that Dr. Lunn is a worthy colleague of the noble Hughes.

Preaching on "Charles Bradlaugh," the Rev. C. F. Aked, of Liverpool, said he admired the Mr. Bradlaugh of earlier and better times, but in his late years Mr. Bradlaugh had changed for the worse, and lost something of the loyalty, simplicity, and singleness of purpose of his less-honored life. In support of this charge Mr. Aked made some statements which are all false or misleading. First, he alleged that Mr. Bradlaugh had practically dropped his Atheistic propaganda. Now this is untrue. Mr. Bradlaugh's paper was Atheistic to the end. Nor did he cease to lecture against Christianity and Theism. All his evening lectures at the Hall of Science were on theological questions; and the last lecture he ever gave there, on behalf of the Forder Testimonial Fund, was a Freethought discourse on the authenticity of the Gospels.

Mr. Aked next asserts that "Mr. Bradlaugh relinquished his position as head of the Secular Society." This is quite true. But he only did so after a shattering illness, from which he emerged a broken man. He had not the strength for the duties of President of the N. S. S. in addition to his lecturing, writing, and parliamentary work; and certainly the Secular party did not desire him to resign his seat for Northampton. He alone could fill that adequately, but the N. S. S. could go on under other management. Mr. Bradlaugh was helpful to the Society after he resigned the chair. One of his last acts was the drawing up of a long document on Secular Burial for the Society.

The third allegation is that Mr. Bradlaugh dropped his Republicanism. This is also untrue. His Republican writings were still sold and circulated, and the policy of his paper was "Republican" to the last. Of course Mr. Bradlaugh made no Republican speeches in the House of Commons, but that is not the place for abstract eloquence or theoretical propaganda. Mr. Aked has a right to think Mr. Bradlaugh very Conservative. That is a matter of opinion. But it is a matter of fact that Mr. Bradlaugh's later speeches on the Labor question were on the lines he had followed from the very beginning of his career. He himself said, and said truly, "I may have stood still, but I have not changed."

Allegation the fourth is that Mr. Bradlaugh "surrendered the most vital principle of his own Oaths Bill, the principle of repudiation of religious tests, out of eagerness to secure the passing of the measure, and against the advice of some earnest Radicals." This is a series of statements. One clause specifies Mr. Bradlaugh's motive. He was eager, says Mr. Aked, to pass the measure. But may he not have been

eager to get the question settled as far as it could be in the circumstances? In the world of ideas there is no compromise, but often, if not always, there must be compromise in the world of practice. And there is nothing to prevent those "earnest Radicals" from completing Mr. Bradlaugh's labors and perfecting his measure when the time is ripe for doing it.

For our part, we would fain be juster to Mr. Aked than he is to Mr. Bradlaugh. We shall therefore be content with adding that, in our opinion, Mr. Aked's judgment has been warped by forgetfulness of the fact that a statesman and a propagandist cannot act exactly alike, and that there is a pedantry of consistency which is too often the characteristic of shallow minds.

The Rev. W. Binns, Unitarian minister of Plymouth, has no doubt that Mr. Bradlaugh has learnt a good deal since his death. But this is a point on which it is easy to be confident. Mr. Binns remarks that Mrs. Besant has learnt the lesson, while in the land of the living, which Mr. Bradlaugh had to die before he mastered. Evidently Mr. Binns is among the prophets. For the rest, the subject is too delicate for much discussion.

Dr. Parker thinks Mr. Bradlaugh had good qualities, but he was deficient in some respects, or he would have shared the religious opinions of Dr. Parker. Mr. Bradlaugh's "intellect was destitute of veneration, of sympathy, and of the imaginative faculty that sees upper and eternal meanings." Very likely! Mr. Bradlaugh preferred seeing things as they were to seeing them as they were not. He had not sufficient imagination, or perception of the upper and eternal meanings, to go howling like Dr. Parker at a proposal to give Roman Catholics the same political rights as Protestants. Mr. Bradlaugh was below (or above) these things.

The *Wiltshire Telegraph* is wroth with the Devizes Liberals for praising Mr. Bradlaugh, whom it describes as a far more immoral man than Mr. Parnell. With regard to Mr. Bradlaugh's death "it is most contemptible and most ridiculous to say that the nation or any section of the community has suffered a loss." All the chief papers in England, then are "contemptible and ridiculous" to the oracle of the *Wiltshire Telegraph*. However, the oracle admits that Mr. Bradlaugh had "some virtues," which is probably more than its best friend will say of the *Wiltshire Telegraph* when its epitaph is written.

Speaking of Mr. Bradlaugh's funeral the *Weekly Times and Echo* praises the old method of burial, when the body shrouded in linen or woollen, was lowered from out of the parish coffin direct to the earth. It says "The day has certainly arrived when our speedy choice must be made between cremation and the return to the inexpensive and decent method of burial practised by our forefathers." How is it the funeral reformers never think of the body being put to some use? Medical men have a difficulty in getting a sufficient supply of bodies for practical anatomy and demonstrative surgery. If a body is worth something why should it be thought the only proper thing to remove it out of sight? Is it not more considerate and respectful to the dead to consign them to a physician or some anatomical school, that even in death that they may aid in benefiting survivors. Bentham and Carlyle thought of these things and ordered them to be attended to in their wills.

The *Manchester Guardian* makes the wonderful discovery that Mr. Bradlaugh "began to hesitate to call himself an Atheist." The hesitation must have begun after his death then, for the very last number of the *National Reformer* brought out during his life was "Atheistic, Republican and Malthusian."

Mr. Denham, newsagent, Newport-street, Bolton, is a man of somewhat ostentatious virtue. Being asked for a copy of Paine's *Age of Reason*, he replied that it was a most immoral book, and he would not sell it for its weight in gold. He is hardly likely, however, to get such a price, for other newsagents are more compliant. Some of them sell the *Age of Reason* with pleasure and blush when a young lady asks for a Bible.

Poor old Archdeacon Denison! He is the honest watchdog of the Church of England, and he barks furiously at every

heretic. But the more knowing clergy see that this is a very old-fashioned proceeding, and decidedly dangerous to the Church itself. The Lower House of Convocation has, accordingly, refused the appointment of a committee to consider *Lux Mundi*. We tender the Archdeacon our sincere condolence.

What did Mr. George Howell, M.P., mean by voting against Mr. Gladstone's Catholic Disabilities Bill? Surely there must be some of his Radical constituents who will tell him that Catholics have as much right as Nonconformists to aspire to the position of Lord Chancellor or Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

The vicars of Ramsgate and Christchurch are doing their best to suppress the landing of fish on Sunday. Their efforts, if successful, will result in very considerable loss to the poor fishermen, whose calling is always precarious, and who cannot get their fish caught on Saturday to London in sufficient time. But what of that? They ought to be at church and supporting the ministers.

A Lincolnshire rector is "wanted." A warrant is out for his arrest. He is charged with an offence of which the clergy are more frequently guilty than any other class of men. Time appears to have been given him to get away, and he is now on the Continent.

The Rev. F. de Lacy White, rector of Mavesyn Ridware, near Rugeley, fancies he has a right to chastise boys who do not attend his school. He has been fined £1 and costs for striking a lad whose home he visited to demand why he did not attend.

It is to be hoped the Rev. Mr. Greenfield, one of the Parliamentary parsons, against whom a jury has given a verdict for £100 in connection with betting transactions, will in future leave such discreditable practices alone, and attend to the religious instruction of his people. If he must bet, let him resign his appointment in the Parliamentary Church and go on the turf. It seems a scandalous thing that a clergyman should show the bad example of indulging in one of the greatest curses of this country. If it were not that the Church of England is a department of the State, no congregation would possibly allow a gambling clergyman to be a minister of religion among them.—*Reynolds's*.

The tower of Fulwood church near Sheffield, got on fire but God's building was rescued by the help of the Fire Brigade.

Floods in China have resulted in the loss of over a thousand lives. The suffering of the poor is intense, and the roads are everywhere thronged with starving wretches. But they are all under the watchful care of divine Providence.

Now is the season when good Christians, having previously put themselves outside a square feed on pancakes, metaphorically clothe themselves with sackcloth and ashes to commemorate the fasting and temptation of their Lord and Savior. Just fancy God tempted by the Devil. Can a more ridiculous farce and fable be discovered in the mythologies of the heathen?

General Booth says the Salvation Army is inspired by God. His opinion, however, does not seem to be shared by other Christians. We read in the *Independent* that two Salvation lasses were recently turned away as "not wanted there" from a Dissenting chapel in the City.

Robert Joseph Kyd minister of Stevenston, is to be proceeded against by the Presbytery of Irvine for heresy. He has the impudence to say what every scholar admits, namely that Job was not an actual person but a dramatic character. He is also wicked enough to believe that no one will suffer for ever and ever in hell. For these enormities he will no doubt be properly punished.

Lady Herbert, in the Catholic *Harvest*, tells the English Freemasons that they forget that they are only a branch of a vast organisation "whose watchwords are 'hatred to God and his Church.'" They will be astonished at receiving such information on so excellent authority.

Lady Herbert follows this up with a horrible tale of a young man who refused to say his prayers when dying. And so a soul was lost. All through the young man being a Freemason.

The *Star* has been showing up the exposure of Mr. Cecil Husk, who, with some other mediums, gave *séances* at 61 Lamb's Conduit-street, where the materialised spirit "Gladys" was a frequent visitor. One young man concealed an electric light in his scarf pin, turned it on suddenly, and Gladys was revealed as Mr. Husk himself.

Mrs. Groake, who cut the throat of her five months' old child at Liverpool, told the police that "the Devil told her to do it." People say she is insane, without noting the insanity of her Christian creed.

The Rev. T. H. Evan Lee Toler is charged with obtaining £5 7s. 6d. by false pretences from Catherine Sibley. As he read the prayers at Emanuel Church, Gunnersbury, he got trusted to that amount.

The Rev. W. T. Moreton, of the Congregational Church, Christ Church, thinks something must be done to render the services more attractive. He is prepared to have questions put to him after his sermons, if only it is done "in a christianlike spirit"—that is, we presume, not going too deeply into the subject.

"Attend your church," the parson cries;
To church each woman goes,
The old go there to close their eyes,
The young to eye their clothes.

Dr. E. A. Abbott, late head master of the City of London School, writes in the *Contemporary Review* on "The Realities of Christianity." These include such matters as that the popular view of Biblical miracles are false. Jesus never rose from the dead literally, but only spiritually, and of course ascended into heaven in like fashion. The text of the gospels, too, urges Dr. Abbott, is different from when it left the hands of its authors. The unrealities of Christianity are far more evident than its realities, doctor.

The Working Men's Lord's Day Association, the working man element in which has never yet manifested itself, has memorialised the London County Council to stop the Sunday bands in the parks. The parks' committee have quietly sat upon the memorial.

"I would have you remember, brethren," said the preacher, "the same master hand that contrived the celestial system fashioned the least of earthly atoms as well; the superb architect of the mountains arranged the minute threads of gold within them; and remember, friends, the God who made me made a daisy."

Rabbi Schindler thinks it a mere question of time when the whole world will be included within the pale of Judaism. If he includes the rite of circumcision we have not found such faith; no, not in all Christendom. Our impression is that Judaism like Christianity, instead of conquering the world is being conquered by it.

Messrs. Chapman and Hall publish a "latter-day romance," entitled *The Christ that is to Be*. Christ turns up at the scene of Mr. Ruskin's experiment at Orpington, Kent, in 2100. He carries a bag of carpenter's tools, and walked from Dover to Orpington in two days—no very extraordinary feat. Where he came from previously is not clear. "His figure was well developed, but scantily covered with flesh." He takes a garret in the most squalid district of the East-end in order to live with the poorest members of his religion, is kicked out of St. Paul's, and at last vanishes in thin air.

Hugh Price Hughes has been preaching in a certain Cornish town and begging for his West London Mission. He managed to get £64, while a collection for the local hospital only realised a quarter of that amount. On leaving the town, Mr. Hughes presented the porter who brought his luggage the magnificent sum of one penny. He evidently means to divert as little cash as possible from the salvation of souls.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, February 15, Free Library Hall, Ocean-road, South Shields: at 11, "The Star of Christ in the Night of Faith"; at 3, "The Grand Old Book: a Reply to the Grand Old Man"; at 7, "Oration on Charles Bradlaugh."

Monday, Feb. 16, Central Hall, Waterloo, Blyth: at 7, "Will Christ Save Us?"

Tuesday, Feb. 17, Oddfellows' Hall, Saville-street, North Shields: at 8, "Why I am an Atheist."

Wednesday, Feb. 18, Albert Hall, Willington: at 7.30, "Is Christianity True?"

Thursday, Feb. 19, Central Hall, Dundas-street, Spennymoor: at 7.30, "Is Christianity True?"

Friday, Feb. 20, Middlesboro (no bill arrived): "A Freethinker's View of Jesus Christ."

Saturday, Feb. 21, Oxhill (no bill arrived): "Oration on Charles Bradlaugh."

Feb. 22, Newcastle.

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Hall of Science.

April 5, Birmingham; 12, Camberwell; 19, Belfast; 26, Liverpool.

May 10, Camberwell.

June 7, Camberwell; 14 and 21, Hall of Science.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C. All business communications to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the office, post free to any part of Europe, America, Canada and Egypt, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 6s. 6d.; Half Year, 3s. 3d.; Three Months, 1s. 7½d. Australia, China and Africa:—One Year, 8s. 8d.; Half Year, 4s. 4d.; Three Months, 2s. 2d. India:—One Year, 10s. 10d.; Half Year, 5s. 5d.; Three Months, 2s. 8½d.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 3s.; Half Column, 15s.; Column, £1 10s. Special terms for repetitions.

IT being contrary to Post-office regulations to announce on the wrapper when the subscription is due, subscribers will in future receive the number when their subscription expires in a colored wrapper.

J. RITSON.—That *Star* paragraph was answered by Mr. J. M. Robertson on behalf of Mrs. Bonner. It was ridiculously untrue. Mr. Bradlaugh was always at work.

J. ROBERTS.—Thanks for the cutting. See paragraph.

A. CLARK.—We have already said that we think the silent funeral was a terrible mistake. We are not in a position to answer your letter more fully. Mrs. Bonner is responsible for the funeral arrangements, and she had a right to act on her own sense of duty.

H. DARTON.—Thanks for the cutting. Mr. Foote hopes to visit Plymouth before the dog days.

F. WESTERN.—Thanks for the paper, though we do not intend to notice it. It is an act of curious egotism for a reverend gentleman to oppose a Freethought lecturer with effusive politeness, and then to go home and pen a bombastic account of his glorious triumph over the infidel.

H. M. MERRIDEW.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

E. LUCAS.—Some one has been poking fun at your friend. Mr. Bradlaugh was not a shoemaker, and he was no relation whatever to Mrs. Besant. We should have answered your friend's letter if it had reached us.

G. DICKINSON.—Hardly up to the mark.

C. TURNER.—Reports of the rowdiness of Celestine Edwards's meetings towards Freethought opponents are getting quite monotonous.

SARAH WATERLOW.—The reference was certainly in very bad taste. There seems universal satisfaction with the calling of the Memorial meeting at the Hall of Science.

A. BRIGHTLY, 30 Beech-street, Barbican, London, E.C., sells the *Freethinker* and other Secular publications.

J. H. ROGERS.—(1) We do not know. (2) Newbury House is the name of a large Catholic educational establishment. (3) The name of God in different languages has frequently been printed.

E. SMEDLEY.—Paley's *Evidences* is not a book to be recommended. It is clever, but disingenuous, and far behind the scholarship of to-day. Do not waste your time on Dr. Angus's analysis of Butler; read Butler for yourself. Perhaps the best book on the sceptical side, in regard to the New Testament documents, is *Supernatural Religion*, but it is an expensive work. We have long had the idea of bringing out a cheap volume on this subject.

J. D. CLAY.—We are glad to see the Oldham Freethinkers are resuming their propaganda. There is a capital field for their labors. Mr. Foote will try to pay you a visit.

R. WALLER.—Thanks. See paragraph.

T. PHILLIPS.—Well written letters in the local press are of great service to our cause.

G. MANCO.—We really cannot tell you who was the last child that Mr. Bradlaugh named in public. We cannot say anything about the photograph you refer to until we have seen it.

W. B. THOMPSON.—It is gratifying to learn that your Memorial Service at Chatham was attended by all sorts and conditions of men, including several Christians.

"SALADIN" of the *Secular Review* informs us that he knew absolutely nothing of the *Daily Chronicle* paragraph which was reproduced in our last number. He is not, to his knowledge, acquainted with any member of the *Chronicle* staff. So far from expressing his sentiments, the paragraph gave him great annoyance. We are glad to hear it.

E. M. WHYTE.—Sorry we cannot find space.

E. P.—We are already over-pressed with copy.

M. L. B.—Doubtless there are plenty of bigots left to speak ill of Mr. Bradlaugh, but the number of them is not what it was.

R. LEECH.—Scarcely up to the mark for publication. You have not mastered the technicalities of verse.

H. R. CLIFTON.—Very good, considering the circumstances in which you worked.

F. A. DAVY.—Mr. Foote has summoned a special meeting of the N. S. S. Executive for Thursday evening (Feb. 12) to consider the question of a memorial to Mr. Bradlaugh.

E. ANDERSON.—See reply to F. A. Davy. The matter will be dealt with at once.

D. HUGHES.—Thanks. We had already seen and commented upon it.

W. GILMOUR.—We are obliged for the cuttings.

J. K. SYKES.—Certainly it is a distinction to be the only jurymen or witness who ever affirmed at Southend. Go on affirming. Let the other party do the swearing.

N. O. O.—What we said was that more new members had joined the N. S. S., in the last eight months than in the whole of 1889.

H. W. (Wolverhampton).—Mr. Foote will write as soon as possible.

G. RODWELL, 4 Blenheim-crescent, W., sells the *Freethinker* and other Secular publications.

A. RAPHAEL.—Thanks. See paragraph.

W. TAYLOR.—All persons who "bring the Holy Scriptures or the Christian religion into disbelief and contempt" are liable to imprisonment, and under the statute of William III. to the loss of civil and political rights. Any legacy to a Freethought Society, or for a Freethought purpose, is invalid. Ask the candidate if he favors this injustice, and if not, whether he will vote for a Bill to abolish it.

W. H. CHEESEMAN.—Every religion must have spread a good deal before it could use the sword. As Carlyle said, you must get your sword before you can use it. Christianity used the sword of the temporal power as soon as it could. As for the "miracles" of early Christianity, we have only to say that miracles were then as plentiful as blackberries. The Pagans had as many as the Christians. Pray explain to your "open-air audience" how it is that Christian miracles have, all of them, such an ancient and fish-like smell. They all happened in the dim and distant past. Why not give us a few fresh ones? *One* would suffice. Give us, or find us, *one*.

W. L. W.—We don't know what Professor Max Müller would call himself. He is not an Atheist. Thanks for the cuttings.

F. LESTER.—Your suggestion has been before the N. S. S. already. There are many objections to it in a country like England.

E. S. DAY.—No doubt, as you say, the death of Mr. Bradlaugh will rouse every Freethinker to a sense of his duty. We must all work harder to make up, as far as possible, for his loss. Glad to hear you have derived benefit from *Bible Heroes* and *Bible Romances*. The latter will be bound in a volume when completed.

A FRIEND (Coventry).—There are many complaints from your town of the difficulty in obtaining the *Freethinker*. Why not try and induce some one to order a parcel weekly direct from the publisher?

H. J. HUDD.—Always glad to receive cuttings.

J. G. BARNES.—The wording of the N. S. S. principles can only be altered, if at all, by the Annual Conference.

J. H. ARTHUR.—That pretended copy of Pilate's death-sentence on Jesus is a silly modern fraud. There is not a scholar in Europe who would do anything but laugh at it, and its publication in so many newspapers only shows the terrible ignorance of ordinary editors on such subjects.

W. JEHU.—See paragraph.

R. D. TURNER.—Pleased to hear from an outspoken Freethinker.

T. H. CATERA.—(1) Not the faintest reason for supposing anything of the kind. (2) Yes, we know Mr. Dunn. He is a harmless person. The notion of his "defeating" Freethought leaders in debate is food for mirth.

FORDER TESTIMONIAL FUND.—X. £3.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Fritankaren—Liberty—Freethought—Ironclad Age—Menschentum—Echo—Neues Freireligioses Sonntags-Blatt—Freidenker—The Liberator—Der Arme Teufel—Secular Thought—Boston Investigator—Western

Figaro—La Vérité Philosophique—Progressive Thinker—Flaming Sword—Loyal American—Two Worlds—Star-Club and Institute Journal—Spennymoor Journal—Bradford Observer—Portsmouth News—Leicester Daily Mercury—Labor Tribune—Umpire Newark Herald—Redruth Independent—People—Newcastle Daily Leader—Derby Mercury—Hull Daily News—Open Court—Manchester Examiner and Times—Morpeth Herald—Bournemouth Guardian—Harvest—Staffordshire Advertiser—Daily Telegraph—Scripture Readers' Journal—Newsagent—Edinburgh Evening News—Aberdeen Free Press—Aberdeen Evening Gazette—Hackney Times—Los Angeles Times—Dudley Herald—Reading Observer—Brighton Times—Leeds Mercury.

FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish to call our attention. CORRESPONDENCE should reach us not later than Tuesday if a reply is desired in the current issue. Otherwise the reply stands over till the following week.

SUGAR PLUMS.

There was a tremendous run on last week's *Freethinker*. We began by printing two thousand extra copies, and we had to put the formes on the machine three times before Friday night. We thought enough were printed on Saturday, and the type was distributed, but the *Freethinker* was out of print on Monday morning, and the trade was still calling for further supplies.

Mr. Foote had splendid meetings at Leeds on Sunday. In the morning Mr. Fisher presided, in the afternoon Mr. Smith, of Farsley, and in the evening Mr. Judge. Mr. Judge has been rather out of our movement for some time, although always an earnest Freethinker, but he intends to do more work for the cause, and is helping to form a *bonâ fide* Branch of the N. S. S. in Leeds. About thirty fresh names were received after Mr. Foote's evening lecture, which is a very clear demonstration that Secularism is far from decaying in Leeds. It only wants organising and keeping out of the old ruts.

Freethinkers came to Mr. Foote's lectures from many places outside Leeds. Over fifty sat down to tea in the ante-room. All were deploring the loss of Mr. Bradlaugh, but all resolved that the movement should go on.

There was a very large sale of literature. No doubt this will help to spread our principles in Leeds. Altogether great credit is due to Messrs. Lyons and Gibbins, and other friends who organised the meetings. If the new Branch continues to work in this spirit it will soon make headway.

Mr. Foote was desired to print his "Oration on Charles Bradlaugh," and he will probably do so as early as possible.

A meeting will be held at Crampton's Temperance Hotel, Briggate, Leeds, this evening (Feb. 15) at 7, to formally start the new Branch, and take steps for carrying on the work in the immediate future.

Before the date of this number of the *Freethinker* Mr. Foote will have left London for a ten days' lecturing tour in Northumberland and Durham. He will lecture three times on the two Sundays at South Shields and Newcastle, and at smaller places on the intervening week-nights.

Mr. Touzeau Parris, who is slowly recovering from the effects of his severe fall, in opening his lecture at the Hall of Science last Sunday, alluded in feeling terms to the death of Mr. Bradlaugh. The movement had sustained a great loss, but there was the greater necessity of carrying it on with vigor. Nothing would have pleased Mr. Bradlaugh better than to know this was being done. That will be the grandest tribute we can pay to his memory. Mr. Parris's remarks were received with much applause. Next week he will lecture again, dealing especially with the Pagan origin of the Christian Symbols.

The Chatham Secular Society held a Memorial Service in honor of Mr. Bradlaugh on Sunday evening. We have been favored with a copy of the hymns sung on the occasion.

Mr. Holyoake, while turning over the pages of an old diary he had forgotten, discovered a little bill of Mr. Bradlaugh's first Freethought lecture, at which Mr. Holyoake presided.

Mr. G. Standing has been allowed to print a *fac simile* of this bill, and copies are being sold in a memorial envelope for one penny. The can be obtained of Mr. Forder, at 28 Stonecutter-street. The proceeds of the sale, after paying the bare cost of production, will go to the Freethinkers' Benevolent Fund.

Last Sunday afternoon and evening Mr. Geo. Standing spoke at Baskerville Hall, Birmingham, on the life and work of the late Mr. Bradlaugh. Despite the short notice that was given, the audiences were fairly large, and in the evening, when the speaker dealt with the Freethought phase of Mr. Bradlaugh's career, the hall was filled by a thoroughly sympathetic and attentive audience. It is proposed to start a fresh Branch of the N. S. S. at Small Heath. There is plenty of room in Birmingham for an extension of Secular propaganda, and the new departure is conceived in a spirit of entire friendliness towards the Baskerville Hall workers. The idea is to organise open-air lectures in the neighborhood of Small Heath, and the effect of this would be to assist the operations of the existing Branch.

The watch lie, revived by E. Breach in the *Portsmouth Evening News*, has been ably replied to by Mr. Jannaway, the secretary of the Portsmouth Branch, W. Cole and others. Mr. Breach has been offered £50 if he would substantiate his statement. A month ago he might have been made to pay as much for making it.

The *Halifax Free Press*, which gives a report of the memorial service as well as the funeral, has a full account of Mr. Bradlaugh by "Saxon John," who knew him well and appreciated him highly.

The *Jewish Chronicle* says: "Mr. Bradlaugh will long be remembered with gratitude by the Jewish community for the signally fair and generous attitude which he assumed on the Immigration Committee."

New members are joining the National Secular Society daily. A considerable number have joined since Mr. Bradlaugh's death. This is most encouraging. It shows that Secularists are alive to their duty, and that sympathisers have resolved to draw closer to our party.

An article on "Voltaire and His First Exile," in *Temple Bar*, deals with his sojourn in England and first contact with English Freethought.

Messrs. Fisher, Unwin and Co. have re issued Mary Woolstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, with a preface by Mrs. Fawcett.

The Mayor of the third arrondissement of Paris has set up an organ with a view of making civil marriages as attractive and æsthetic as those of the church.

A fresh course of Free Lectures under the auspices of the London Secular Federation will be given in the Temperance Hall, Doddington-grove, Battersea Park-road, on Fridays, Feb. 20 and 27, and March 6 and 13. Owing to Mr. Foote's absence in the north, Mr. G. Standing will open the course. Mr. Foote delivers the second and last lectures. Mr. Moss delivers the third.

Secretaries of London Branches should take note that the Secular Federation's monthly lecture list will be printed henceforth for distribution on the last Sunday in every month. The Tuesday before the last Sunday is the latest day for receiving the Branch lists. This rule will be rigidly adhered to.

"Observer" writes that Mr. Rowney lectured in Hyde Park on Sunday morning to a large audience, and was opposed by Mr. Dunn who has "driven the Atheists from the Park." Mr. Dunn had to ask his opponent for the reference to well-known texts from the Sermon on the Mount.

A special members' meeting of the Finsbury Park Branch will be held on Monday evening at 8, at Mr. Rowney's, 155 Whinston-road, Green-lanes, N.

"Perhaps it will interest the people of Blyth and its vicinity to learn that Mr. G. W. Foote, the immortal editor of the *Freethinker*, will make his appearance in Blyth to lecture on

Feb. 16th. Mr. Foote was run into prison for the opinions and the courage he exhibited on one occasion. He is credited with being a man of considerable ability and great debating powers. It remains to be seen whether the salaried clergy of Blyth will venture to convert Mr. Foote from 'the error of his way,' or give him a foothold on the theoretical Christian platform. It is to be hoped the people of Blyth will not put their foot in it as was done when first poor Bradlaugh came to Blyth as a stranger, and was denied Christian hospitality. It is to be hoped that the professedly Christian community of Blyth will be kind to the new stranger, recalling to memory the old Scripture saying that they may be harboring an 'angel unawares.'—*Morpeth Herald*.

Mr. G. Naewiger writes to the *Hull Daily News* in reply to its note on "the decay of Secularism," which is becoming quite a cant phrase in Christian circles. Mr. Naewiger points out that Mr. Foote recently addressed large audiences in Hull, and after referring to Mrs. Besant's secession, he declares that "Secularism was never stronger than it is today." We advise our Hull contemporary to study the progress of the local Branch of the N.S.S. before writing again on this subject.

Dr. T. R. Allinson, the well-known hygienic and Free-thought doctor, will debate the Malthusian question with Mr. A. F. Hills, president of the London Vegetarian Society, in the Library of the Memorial Hall, Farringdon-street, London, E.C., on Friday evening (Feb. 13). The debate opens at eight o'clock. It is not to be a platonic encounter. Both disputants will grapple with the practical side of the question.

Dr. Allinson has been sparring with the Vestry. He refused to pay Church rates and the Vestry county-courted him. He was ordered to pay but remained contumacious. Then they sent a bailiff to distrain, but Mrs. Allinson declared the household goods to be hers. The doctor expects committal. He has paid the other rates but he won't pay this one, and as he is a vegetarian he thinks he can stand the prison diet for a few days. No doubt! All the same, however, we hope the Marylebone vestrymen will pause before writing themselves down asses. Some of them must surely see the silliness of imprisoning one of the best citizens in the parish.

In his curious paper on "The Soul of Man under Socialism," in the current *Fortnightly Review*, Oscar Wilde says: "The ideals that we owe to Christ are the ideals of the man who abandons society entirely, or of the man who resists society absolutely. But man is naturally social. Mediævalism is real Christianity; and the mediæval Christ is the real Christ. When the Renaissance dawned upon the world, and brought with it the new ideals of the beauty of life and the joy of living, men could not understand Christ."

Black and White, the new high-class illustrated journal which took over the premises of the Freethought Publishing Company, gives in its first number a finely-engraved portrait of Mr. Bradlaugh. The rather disparaging notice which accompanies it bears traces of having been inspired by one of his "co-workers, with whom he not only parted company, but ceased friendly relations." The notice excites an indignant letter from Robert Buchanan to the *St. James's Gazette*.

The *Ironclad Age*, of Indianapolis, for Jan. 31, gives a reprint of Mr. Foote's Christmas article on "The Son of a Ghost." We observe that Dr. Monroe is sarcastic on the mildness of Dr. Westbrook, the President of the American Secular Union, who wants Freethought to lie down peacefully with Christianity.

Mr. Henry G. Hewlett, in an article on "Forged Literature" in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century* says, "The clumsy interpolator of a well-known passage in Josephus (*Antiq.* lib. xviii., c. 3) can hardly be acquitted of a design to invent evidence wherewith to silence the assertion of Hebrew opponents that the life of the Founder of Christianity was unrecorded by the historian of his era."

A smoking concert, in aid of the funds of the Woolwich Branch, took place on Saturday evening. Mr. A. B. Moss, Mr. H. A. Kemp, and others gave their services. Miss

Vance's dramatic company could not perform in consequence of the illness of one of its members.

Macmillan for February contains a paper on Free Schools, by T. Macamara. He thinks the main fight will come over the character of the management of the schools.

Moncure D. Conway writes in *The Open Court* on General Booth's scheme under the title "A Samaritan on Change." He says, "The contributions have all gone to a hand whose trustworthiness is shown by inscribing its name on work it did not do."

Mr. Louis Brandt, of *Der Arme Teufel* (Detroit) is on a visit to England. Mr. Brandt is a young man, full of health and intelligence. He is anxious to make the acquaintance of German Freethinkers in London.

Many influential friends have spoken of nominating Colonel Ingersoll as President of the United States. This would, however, bring an undesirable combination of Catholics and Churchmen and other religions to run a bigot in opposition. He could command any position in the State he asked for but for the consequent outburst of bigotry.

The Forder testimonial will be presented at the Manchester Hotel, Aldersgate-street, on Monday, March 2. A number of Mr. Forder's friends will dine on that occasion. Mr. Foote will preside. Tickets can be obtained at the Hall of Science or at 28 Stonecutter-street.

LONDON SECULAR FEDERATION.

COUNCIL MEETING held at the Hall of Science, Feb. 15, the President, Mr. G. W. Foote, in the chair. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed. Before proceeding to the general business of the Council the President suggested (this being the first meeting since the death of Mr. Bradlaugh) the following resolution, which was moved by Mr. E. Anderson (West Ham), and seconded by Mr. H. Courtney (West London):—"This monthly Council meeting of the London Secular Federation deeply deplores the death of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh as a very great loss to the cause of Freethought and Humanity; and desires to express its profound sympathy with his daughter in her bereavement." This resolution was unanimously agreed to, and ordered to be forwarded to Mrs. Bonner.—The matter of the Children's Party was next discussed; and the secretary presented financial statement as to the course of lectures at Athenæum Hall, and reported arrangements for Battersea. On the question of further lectures in East London, it was moved and carried, That the secretary take steps with a view of arranging for a course at Stratford.—The subject of Secular candidates for the forthcoming School Board election was introduced by Mr. Martin (Battersea), the Finsbury Branch having also instructed their delegate to bring the matter forward. After some discussion it was agreed that Messrs. G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler prepare a leaflet on the subject of Secular Education for distribution in the various constituencies.—It was decided, after full discussion, That all lecture lists for insertion in the Monthly Programme must reach the secretary at latest by the Tuesday preceding the last Sunday in each month, and that this rule be strictly enforced.—Mr. C. J. Hunt and others dwelt on the necessity of appealing for membership of the N. S. S. at all lectures, and urged the Branches to take proper measures to effect that end. The Council then adjourned.—EDMUND POWNCEBY, secretary.

THE LATE MR. BRADLAUGH.

After an address by Mr. Holyoake (the earliest public friend of Mr. Bradlaugh) on his career and character, delivered at the Hall of Science, the following resolution was unanimously carried, moved, seconded by the undersigned:—"That this crowded meeting in this Hall, consecrated by the splendid advocacy of Mr. Bradlaugh within its walls, desire to convey to Mrs. Bonner their deep sympathy and condolence at the death of her father, whose name is illustrious by his national services and his life-long vindication of Freethought. They who send this message trust that the knowledge of the affection and admiration with which they regard her father's memory, may mitigate the ineffaceable sorrow of his daughter."—George Jacob Holyoake, Edward Truelove, R. A. Cooper, R. O. Smith, Chairman.

A NONCONFORMIST MINISTER'S TRIBUTE TO MR. BRADLAUGH.

A STRIKING sermon on Mr. Bradlaugh was preached last Sunday night by the Rev. G. S. Ordish, pastor of the Norton-road Congregational Church, Stockton-on-Tees. Taking the text "And they cast him out" (John ix., 34), he said we lived in times of strange reversions of public feeling and opinion, revealing at once both the strength and weakness of English public life. We opposed a man to-day, and to-morrow we sought to repair the injury we had done. Ignorant prejudices arose from want of sympathetic contact. That truth applied to Charles Bradlaugh. Ten years ago English bigotry regarded him as a monster. To-day it was known he was not a monster, but a man. At that time no weapon was coarse enough wherewith to assail him. A perfect army was arrayed against him, blocking up every avenue of his life. He lived all that down. He made his enemies his friends. The simple, silent funeral closing over that stormy life spoke volumes to the service he had done to men of all ranks and stations and of all lands. He did not think the Church should be the last to recognise the duty it owed to Charles Bradlaugh. That was a strange thing for a minister to say. His life was clear enough, consistent enough. Keen eyes watched his public and private life—eagles' eyes by day, owls' eyes by night; but he lived perfectly secure—secure in his very honesty. Proceeding to sketch Mr. Bradlaugh's early life, the preacher severely criticised the conduct of the clergyman who drove him from the Sunday-school in which he was a teacher and from his situation because of his conscientious religious difficulties—his non-acceptance of the Thirty-nine Articles, which an eminent dignitary of the Church of England once described as "like forty stripes, save one."

Concerning Mr. Bradlaugh's moral character, he believed those who maligned him most, might have learned a wholesome lesson from some of his virtues. His Atheism arose, not from impurity of life, not from ignorance bred of small familiarity with the Scriptures, but from the study of the Scriptures. He was an earnest Sunday-school teacher in a difficulty. Harsh, intolerant treatment and persistent persecution drove him out, and the wonder would have been if he had remained a Christian. The greatest miracle of the age in his (the preacher's) mind, was that Christianity had survived the caricatures of its friends, and the false professions and practices of its disciples.

IN MEMORIAM.—CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

DIED JAN. 30, 1891.

Farewell to thee, brave battler for the right,
Whose heart was full of sturdy hate of wrong,
Whose voice and pen were active, fearless, strong
To smite the foes of liberty and light.

Thou wert the people's champion in the fight
'Gainst error and injustice, and the sacred fire
Of love for all mankind glowed clear and pure
Within thy breast, till fell on thee the Night.

I loved thee, brother, for thy stainless life,
Thy passionate devotion to the public weal,
Thy grand unselfishness and large-thoughted mind.
Strong soul, now quiet after storm and strife,
With tear-dimm'd eyes I think of thee, and feel
The loss thy death hath been to human kind.

J. J. NICHOLSON.

A CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.

CHARLES BRADLAUGH is dead, and England has lost one of the most striking personalities that stirred in her social and political life. A large man physically, the Luke Raeburn of Edna Lyall's masterpiece stood head and shoulders, morally and intellectually, above the majority of his co-workers in this busy little world of ours. Morally? Yes, we who knew the man as he really was say, with all the earnestness engendered by matured conviction, morally. His ideas were not as ours in all respects, but those who decry him little know how thin was the wall that, in essentials, divided him from us. And as the man thought, so the man acted—of how many can as much be said? His intellectual power no one—who is intellectually capable of judging—would ven-

ture to call in question. The son of a poor man, ill-educated, tossed early into the world to make his fortune—a thing he never did—he gained for himself, by sheer force of intellect—and character, without which intellectual gifts are more of a curse than a blessing—a position which most men might envy, and which many men did envy.

And the enormous odds against which he fought! Some few men have started from even smaller beginnings, and have won positions as eminent, more eminent, and at an earlier age. But how many of them have done it, as Charles Bradlaugh did, full in the teeth of almost every phase of respectable and enlightened public opinion; hampered with the dead-weight of such opinions, political, social, and—as all men know—religious, as he held, and disdained to hide?

How, then, did he gain his position? How was it that the zealous promulgator of doctrines held, most of them, in abhorrence all but universal, a sower of dissension, such as he was, lived to be one of the less than 700 men chosen out of some forty millions of their countrymen to speak and legislate for their fellows; lived to see the record of his violent struggle to enter the historic home of England's greatest men, blotted out from the annals of the period by a nation ashamed of the part she, not he, the one man against millions, had played in that struggle, *nemine contradicente*? How was it that in the House which has witnessed scenes so many, so great, so stirring, whose walls echo down the ages the undying eloquence of the world's greatest orators, that in that House no speaker commanded closer attention, was listened to with more reverent respect, *on both sides*, than the erstwhile blatant demagogue of blasphemous memory.

Answer, ye babblers of ethics! give answer, ye quibblers over metaphysical problems, toyers with the eternal issues of life and death—yea, solve this problem, an ye can!

Know, then, that Charles Bradlaugh won all these through no gifts of Nature, through none of those advantages of early training which ye have misused, but through the early possession and steady cultivation of virtues of which ye never knew, nor now can know, the meaning, puny products of an age which has dethroned Truth and enthroned Diplomacy in her place.

Honesty it was, sterling honesty of purpose, inwoven with an unselfishness which the most benevolent of altruists have sighed for in vain—it was these that won the dead man more than all that any but he, ever full of hope, thought he would attain to the possession of.

"Yes, but he was an Atheist, or at least an Agnostic" (shuffling word, coined to cover a nakedness which had begun to be painful). "He denied his God, he ridiculed the idea of the Redemption, he blasphemed against the Holy Ghost." He did the first, he did the second, but did he, did he commit the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost? Never! His whole life bore unconscious testimony to the in-working of that Spirit. He might have denied this in words, but his every-day actions, those daily, hourly actions which speak so much louder than words, would have given the lie to his words. And his persecutors! How stand they the test? Speak not harshly of them, he seldom did, and he was ever sensitive to their attacks. They maddened him sometimes, as mosquitoes may madden the noblest of God's creatures, and he said much he would fain have recalled when the attacks ceased, and those who were his bitterest enemies fawned on him. He forgave them; not then for us to judge.—*Church Chronicle*.

OBITUARY.

It is with profound regret we have to announce the death of a well-known and sturdy Freethinker, Mr. Wealthall (chemist), of Jackson-street, Hulme. He died after a long illness on Tuesday, February 3, in his 70th year. It is almost needless to assure all those who knew him that he died as he had lived, the same earnest lover of justice and inveterate enemy of bigotry and cant.—C. W.

Religion rests solely on imagination, morality on reason and facts. The scripture says, God made man after his own image; had it said the contrary it would have expressed the truth; for the character of the Deity differs according to the different characters of those by whom he is worshipped; with the Jews he is a God of cruelty and terror; with the Hindoos of toleration and great mercy.—*William Burdon, "Materials for Thinking,"* vol. ii., p. 306; 1820.

SUNDAY MEETINGS.

[Notices of Lectures, etc., must reach us by first post on Tuesday, and be marked "Lecture Notice," if not sent on post-card.]

LONDON.

Ball's Pond secular Hall, 36 Newington Green Road, N.: 7, Mr. J. Coppock, F.C.S., "Vital Force."
 Battersea secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 7.30, Mr. F. Haslam, "The Great French Revolution." Monday, at 8, social gathering. Thursday, at 8, singing and dramatic classes. Friday, at 8, at the Temperance Hall, Duddington Grove, Mr. George Standring will lecture. Admission free.
 Bethnal Green Branch N. S. S.—"The Monarch" Coffee House, 166 Bethnal Green Road, E.: 7.30, Mr. A. T. Dipper, "Is Secularism Decaying?" Admission free.
 Camberwell—61 New Church Road, S.E.: 7. dramatic recital; 7.30 Mr. C. J. Hunt, "Evolution and Design." Friday, at 7.45, Science Classes (Hygiene and Chemistry).
 East London—Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End Road: 8.30, a Freethought lecture.
 Finsbury Park—Mr. Rowney's, 155 Whinston Road, Green Lanes: Monday, at 8, meeting of members.
 Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, E.C.: 7, Mr. Touzeau Parris, "Christian Doctrines, Rites, and Symbols of Pagan Origin."
 Hammersmith—Hammersmith Club, Grove House, 1 The Grove, Broadway: Tuesday at 8, Mr. W. Heaford, "A Few Words about the Bible."
 Kilburn—Liberal Club, Belsize Road, High Road: Friday, at 8, Mr. C. J. Hunt, "Evolution v. Design."
 Leyton—Mr. Beadle's, 10 Daisey Villas, Manor Road: 7, a meeting of members and friends.
 Milton Hall, Kentish Town Road, N.W.: 7, Orchestral Band; 7.30, Mrs Annie Besant, "Sin, Crime, and Punishment." Monday, at 8.30 social meeting. Tuesday, at 8, singing and dramatic classes (practice).
 West Ham—Secular Hall, 121 Broadway, Plaistow: 7, Mrs. Thornton Smith, "Does the Church of England Teach the Doctrine of Eternal Punishment?" Thursday, at 8, Mr. Sam Standring, "English Christianity: its Rise and Decline, III.—Protestant Dissenters."
 Westminster—Liberal and Radical Club, Chapter Street: 7, Mr. E. Calvert, "History of the Shakespearian Drama."
 Woolwich—Sussex Arms, Assembly Room, 80 Plumstead Road (entrance, Maxey Road): 7.30, Mr. A. B. Moss, "The Religion of Charles Bradlaugh."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Battersea Park Gates: 11.15, Mr. Haslam, "Mahomet and the Koran."
 Hyde Park, near Marble Arch, at 11.30, Mr. James Rowney, "Bible Nuts for Christian Evidences Lecturers to Crack."
 Regents Park: 3, Mr. James Rowney, "The Prophet of Nazareth."

COUNTRY.

Blythe—Central Hall, Waterloo: Monday, at 7, Mr. G. W. Foote, "Will Christ Save Us?"
 Chatham—"Old George Inn," Globe Lane: 6.30, Mr. T. Garner, "Man's Soul."
 Glasgow—Albion Hall, College Street: 12 noon, debating class; 6.30, Mr. J. P. Gilmour, "Miracles, Ancient and Modern."
 Heckmondwike—At Mr. John Rothera's, Bottoms: 2.30, a meeting.
 Liverpool—Camden Hall, Camden Street: 3, Discussion Class; 7, Mr. Gowland, "Christ and Confucius."
 Manchester N. S. S., Secular Hall, Rusholme Road, Oxford Road, All Saint's: 6.30, social evening. Free.
 North Shields—Oddfellows' Hall, Saville Street: Tuesday, at 8, Mr. G. W. Foote, "Why I am an Atheist."
 Oldham—Hall of Science, Horsedale Street: Mr. Stanley Jones, 3, "The Struggles of Science"; 6.30, "The Soul Idea and Immortality."
 Portsmouth—Wellington Hall, Wellington Street, Southsea: 3, debating class, "Shakespeare"; 7, Mr. Welch, "John Bunyan."
 Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham street: 7, Mr. Thomas Garbutt, "A Review of Winwood Reade's Book, 'The Martyrdom of Man.'"
 South Shields—Free Library Hall, Ocean Road: Mr. G. W. Foote, 11, "The Star of Christ in the Night of Faith"; 3, "The Grand Old Book: a Reply to the Grand Old Man"; 7, "An Oration on Charles Bradlaugh."
 Spennymoor—Victoria Hall, Dundas Street: 10.30, general meeting; 6, Mr. T. Phillips, "The Indestructibility of Matter." Thursday, at 7.30, in the Central Hall, Dundas Street, Mr. G. W. Foote, "Is Christianity True?"
 Willington—Albert Hall: Wednesday, at 7.30, Mr. G. W. Foote, "Is Christianity True?"

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Oredon Road, Rotherhithe, London. S.E.
 Feb. 15, Woolwich; 22 (morning), Battersea. March 1, Woolwich; 6, Battersea; 29, Camberwell. April 5, Woolwich.
 TOLEMAN-GARNER, 8 Heyworth Road, Stratford, London, E.—Feb. 15, Chatham. March 8, Woolwich.
 STANLEY JONES, 3 Leta Street, City Road, Liverpool.—Feb. 15, Oldham; 22, Bolton.

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